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Letter dated 11 May 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith some points outlining the position of the Republic of the Sudan on the draft resolution on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei scheduled to be adopted on Friday, 12 May 2017 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Magdi Ahmed Mofadal **Elnour**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 11 May 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Sudan's position on the draft resolution on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

- The Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism is part and parcel of the agreements and compromise reached between Sudan and South Sudan in order to solve the pending issues between them, including the Abyei Area question.
- The Sudan Government is not responsible for the obstacles facing the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/312) presented recently to the Security Council states, "Of 40 planned aerial monitoring patrols during the reporting period, 18 were successfully conducted, while 22 were cancelled. A total of 18 of these cancellations, including the suspension of the programme for the entire month of February, were the result of delays in receiving authorization from the South Sudanese authorities."
- The Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism is very important to the stability across the border between Sudan and South Sudan, especially in the light of the recent developments in South Sudan. Sudan is ready to continue cooperating with the Mechanism to enable it to discharge its mandate.
- The Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism needs the operational support of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), which is a neutral body that can help the two sides until they build confidence that enables them to work on their own. Currently, there is no viable alternative to the Mechanism.
- There is a scheduled meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Addis Ababa on 15 May 2017. It is hoped that this meeting may lead to improvement of the two countries' relations, including in the activities of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.
- It is evident that stopping UNISFA support to the operational activities of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism may push one party or the other to take unilateral action.